

## Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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FODAG

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, OCON, WFP

SUBJECT: SAOUMA COMMENTS ON FOOD AID

REF: ROME 6814

1. FOLLOWING REPORT FROM LOCAL AP TICKER SUMMARIZES KEY POINTS OF SAOUMA REMARKS AIMED AT FOOD AID DONORS GIVEN TO FIFTH SESSION OF UN/FAO COMMITTEE ON FOOD AID POLICIES AND PROGRAMS.

2. SAOUMA TERMED PRESENT FOOD AID AS "TRAGICALLY INADEQUATE" AND UNABLE TO COPE WITH EMERGENCY SITUATIONS. HE WAS CRITICAL OF THE SMALL SIZE OF FOOD AID PROGRAMS, CONSIDERING THE NEEDS OF POPULATIONS IN A LARGE NUMBER OF THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES. FAO'S ESTIMATES INDICATING 15 TO 16 MILLION TONS OF GRAIN ARE NECESSARY TO MEET EXPECTED FOOD AID REQUIREMENTS BY 1985, "ARE VERY MODEST, FALL SHORT OF RATHER THAN EXCEED REQUIREMENTS" AND COULDN'T MEET "THE REAL NEEDS OF THE DEFICIT COUNTRIES IF WE WISH TO SUBSTANTIALLY IMPROVE THE NUTRITIONAL LEVEL AND ENSURE THE FOOD SECURITY OF THOSE COUNTRIES. ALSO THEY DO NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT POSSIBLE LARGE-SCALE EMERGENCIES IN THE FUTURE".

ON FAO EMERGENCY AID, SAOUMA EXPRESSED REGRET THAT THE MEANS

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NOW AT HIS DISPOSAL WERE "MANIFESTLY INADEQUATE". EMERGENCY NEEDS, SAOUMA SAID, ARE "NUMEROUS AND PRESSING". HE MENTIONED IN PARTICULAR HIS APPEALS FOR LAOS, WHICH NOW SUFFERS FROM A SERIOUS FOOD DEFICIT, AND OF THE AFRICAN SAHELIAN REGION, "WHERE THE SITUATION IS AGAIN GRAVE".

WHAT MAKES THINGS WORSE FOR COUNTRIES FACED WITH SUDDEN DISASTERS, SAOUMA SAID, IS "THE ABSENCE OF ANY SYSTEM OF FOOD SECURITY AT

WORLD LEVEL". FIRST, THE PRESENT DEADKOCK IN NEGOTIATIONS FOR A NEW AGREEMENT ON GRAIN IS DELAYING THE SETTING UP OF "A SAFETY BUFFER WHICH IS NEVERTHELESS IMPERATIVE". THEN, ASSISTANCE TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WITH FOOD DEFICITS TO HELP THEM SET UP NATIONAL SECURITY STOCKS HAS BEEN TOO LONG NEGLECTED.

3. IN REGARD TO LAST POINT SAOUMA SUGGESTED WFP GIVE PRIORITY TO AIDING FOOD SECURITY PROJECTS. HE INDICATED: "I WOULD BE PREPARED TO BAK IT (WFP) UP IN THE PREPARATION AND EXECUTION OF OPERATIONS... CALLING ON FSAS ALREADY MENTIONED AS WELL AS THE RESOURCES PLACED AT MY DISPOSAL FOR THE PREVENTION OF FOOD LOSSES".

4. COMMENT - FEW DELEGATES PURSUED ACTUAL SAOUMA COMMENTS IN DEBATE WHICH FOLLOWED. WE EXPECT SAOUMA WILL PUSH EVEN HARDER AT COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY TO GET APPROVAL THIS COORDINATED APPROACH UNDER FAO LEADERSHIP. THIS CFA IS NOT LIKELY HOWEVER TO MAKE FSAS A HIGH PRIORITY WFP ACTIVITY.GARDNER

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## Message Attributes

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